

The Right Hon.  
Elizabeth Truss, MP  
Secretary of State  
Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office  
King Charles Street  
London SW1A 2AH



22 June 2022

Dear Madam Secretary,

On Friday, the Catholic Diocese of Ondo State laid to rest more than 40 Nigerian Christians who were murdered by gunmen while worshipping at St. Francis Xavier Catholic Church on Pentecost Sunday.

This atrocity is just one of many lethal acts of Christophobia that have been committed in Nigeria since U.S. Secretary of State Anthony Blinken's decision last November 17 to remove Nigeria from the United States' list of "Countries of Particular Concern" – countries which "engage in or tolerate" "systematic, ongoing, egregious violations of religious freedom". Secretary Blinken offered no explanation for this decision.

Washington's declaration that it had no "particular concern" about religious freedom in Nigeria was openly celebrated by advisors of Nigeria's President Muhammadu Buhari. But it was widely condemned by representatives of Nigeria's victimized religious communities and by human rights defenders, including Christian Solidarity International. Even the state-funded, semi-official U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom in Washington aptly described it as "unexplainable" and "appalling."

Since Secretary Blinken's denial that Nigeria is a country of "particular concern", Nigeria has experienced a spike in atrocity crimes committed against Christians. I am appending documentation of some of them. I am also appending the [ICC Prosecutor's](#) December 2019 Report on Nigeria, the [Genocide Warning](#) for Nigeria issued by CSI in January 2020, and "[Nigeria: Unfolding Genocide?](#)", a report published in 2020 by the All-Party Parliamentary Group for International Religious Freedom or Belief.

On July 5-6, you will host in London an International Ministerial Conference of Freedom of Religion or Belief. CSI urges you to propose to the Conference the adoption of a resolution declaring that Nigeria is indeed a "Country of Particular Concern" on account of "systematic, ongoing, egregious violations of religious freedom", and requesting Secretary Blinken to reinstate Nigeria on the U.S. Department of State's list.

Respectfully,

Dr. John Eibner  
International President

## **Appendix: Major Atrocities Against Nigerian Christians Since Nigeria's Removal from the U.S. CPC List**

**26 November:** Fulani militias kill ten Christians in Taegbe village in Bassa Local Government Area of Plateau State.

**11 January:** Fulani militias attack Ancha village in Bassa LGA of Plateau State, killing 18 Christians, six of whom are children.

**17 March:** Fulani militias abduct 46 Christian adults, as well as some children, from Agunu Dutse village in Kaduna State.

**20 March:** 32 Christians killed in Fulani militia attack on Kagoro town in Kaura LGA, Kaduna State.

**24 March-27 March:** Fulani militias kill over 100 Christians in Giwa LGA of Kaduna State.

**26-27 March:** Fulani militias abduct 45 Christians from six villages in Niger State.

**28 March-4 April:** 30 Christians killed in Fulani militia attacks in Bassa LGA, Plateau State.

**20 April:** Terrorists kill twelve Christians in Yobe state. They were killed after their attackers determined their religious identity by demanding they recite passages from the Qur'an.

**26 April:** Fulani militias kill 21 Christians in four towns along the border between Kaduna and Plateau states.

**11 May:** The Islamic State West Africa Province releases a video showing the execution of 20 Christians.

**12 May:** Deborah Samuel Yakubu, a Christian university student in Sokoto, is lynched by a mob on campus after being accused of "blasphemy." Her killers record themselves boasting about the attack as her body burns in the background. No one has been charged for the crime. The chief imam of Nigeria's national mosque defends the murder; Nigeria's president states that Deborah should have been tried for her alleged "crime."

**5 June:** Gunmen kill more than 40 Christians at Pentecost mass at St. Francis Xavier Catholic Church in Owo, Ondo state. No one has been arrested for the attack.

**5 June:** Fulani jihadists attack three Christian villages in Kajuru LGA of Kaduna State, killing 32 people. The local ECWA church is burned down. Numerous witnesses report seeing military helicopters participating in the attack.

**12 June:** Fulani jihadists kill 37 Christians in Igama village of Benue state.

**19 June:** Gunmen attack two churches in Rubu community of Kaduna state, killing three worshippers and abducting many more. Many houses are destroyed and residents abducted in a wider attack on the surrounding four villages.